



PROCEEDINGS
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A NEW CACOMISTLE FROM SOUTHEASTERN CALIFORNIA

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A study of the distribution of the genus *Bassariscus* in southeastern California has disclosed the presence of a desert form which does not appear to have been previously recognized; it may be described as follows:

Bassariscus astutus willetti, subsp. nov.

Type.—Adult male, skin and skull no. 7,976, Los Angeles County Museum; Riverside Mountains, extreme northeastern corner of Riverside County, California; collected by Kenneth E. Stager, February 13, 1942.

Distribution.—Known from the type locality and southward to, and including, the Palo Verde Mountains, Imperial County, California.

General Characters.—Smaller than *raptor* and *octavus*, color light. Stands apart from *nevadensis* and *yumanensis* in color tone, due to the noticeable suffusion of pinkish buff, both dorsally and ventrally. Skull differs from those of both *yumanensis* and *nevadensis* in its shorter and more massive rostrum. Hairs of white tail rings noticeably pinkish buff at their bases.

Color of Type.—Color of upper parts near cinnamon buff (of Ridgway, 1912), with the black guard hairs giving a somewhat darker appearance to the dorsal region, especially in the mid-dorsal area from the neck to base of tail. The black guard hairs thin out on the flanks, showing light ochraceous buff at point of junction with ventral surface proper. Forelegs bright pinkish buff on ventral surface, shading to a darker color on dorsal side due to presence of dark guard hairs. Paws a clear pinkish buff. Dorsal color of hind legs similar to forelegs, with paws showing the same pinkish buff. Ventral surface of feet dusky around margin of pads. Face of animal showing strong contrast of light and dark areas, with light patches predominant. Cheek patches under eyes ranging from pinkish buff above lips to almost white just under eye. A large postsupraocular patch of very pale pinkish buff above each eye separated by a dark frontal patch. The type specimen possesses a blaze of pale pinkish buff on top of head between the ears, but this marking is not in evidence in any of the other specimens of the series. Ears pale whitish on distal ends, shading into smoky at bases posteriorly. Tail with characteristic eight alternating black rings and black tip. Three black rings at proximal end of tail suffused with ochraceous buff. On ventral surface of tail the black rings are incomplete, resulting in a continuous mid-ventral white line extending the entire length of the tail except for black tip. The hairs of the white tail rings are a noticeable pinkish buff at their bases throughout.

Skull.—Resembling that of *arizonensis*, but with rostrum proportionately shorter and more massive. Larger than *yumanensis*, with the mas-

siveness of the rostrum contrasting strongly with the more slender rostrum of *yumanensis*.

Measurements of Type.—Total length, 765 mm.; tail vertebrae, 400; hind foot, 60; ear, 53. Average of four adult male paratypes: 750 (758-745); 389 (395-378); 64.5 (66-62); 52 (54-49). Skull (type); Greatest length, 78.3; condylobasal length, 74.8; zygomatic breadth, 50.7; breadth of rostrum (over root canine), 14.7; mastoid breadth, 33.7; interorbital constriction, 17.9; canine-molariform toothrow (alveoli), 31.7. Average of four adult male paratypes: greatest length, 78.4 (77.9-79.7); condylobasal length, 75.5 (75.1-76.7); zygomatic breadth, 47.7 (45.9-48.7); mastoid breadth, 33.5 (32.6-34.5); interorbital constriction, 17.2 (16.5-17.8); canine-molariform toothrow, 30.7 (30.0-31.4).

Remarks.—The three specimens, 1 male (L.A.M. 8,397) and 2 females (L.A.M. 8,395 and 8,396), from the Palo Verde Mountains, show the same skull characters as those given for the type, but there is a reduction in the amount of pinkish buff in hair color, thus causing them to favor *yumanensis* in external appearance. This intergradation is to be expected, however, since the Palo Verde Mountains are situated close to the edge of the range of *yumanensis* as given by Huey. A specimen (MVZ 51,608) from near Laguna Dam, Imperial County, California, possesses a skull with characters almost identical with those of the skull of the type of *yumanensis*.

Specimens Examined.—Total number, 10, as follows: RIVERSIDE COUNTY: Riverside Mountains (type locality), 7; IMPERIAL COUNTY: Palo Verde Mountains, 3.